

**CITY OF LODI
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET
TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006**

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, January 31, 2006, commencing at 7:00 a.m.

A. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members – Beckman, Johnson, Mounce, and Mayor Hitchcock

Absent: Council Members – Hansen

Also Present: City Manager King, City Attorney Schwabauer, and Deputy City Clerk Perrin

B. TOPIC(S)

B-1 "Street sweeping program review"

George Bradley, Street Superintendent, reported that the Street Division budget includes the landscape maintenance program; trash pickup in the roadways, parking lots, and alleys; the spring alley clean up; the pick up of illegally dumped items, which is done with the cooperation of California Waste; leaf removal; and weed abatement in the road ways, alleys, and parking lots. The Street Division has a cleanup truck that supports the street sweepers by responding to accidents and picking up items that fall off of vehicles, as well as roadside debris. The sweeper operators routinely turn in suspected abandoned vehicles to the Lodi Police Department and report potential road hazards.

Street sweeping enhances the appearance of the city by removing debris from streets and gutters before it can enter the storm system and is the most cost efficient method of keeping pollutants out of the waterways, which is a requirement of the City's storm water permit. Lodi meets the standard requirement for the frequency of street sweeping set forth in its storm water permit. The standard is not the same throughout the state. Currently, residential areas are swept twice a month; arterials, which are the larger streets, are swept once a week; downtown is three times a week; and the alleys are swept once a month. There are two full-time maintenance workers that operate the street sweepers 90% of the time; although, there are a total of eight maintenance workers that can fill in, if necessary. Benefits to using the same people are that they are familiar with the equipment, they can pinpoint problems before they become expensive, and they know the neighborhoods and what areas to get at certain times due to parked cars. The City has three regenerative air sweepers. The back up unit is used for spills and in-house construction projects. The sweepers are used six years in the front line and three years in back up pursuant to the vehicle replacement policy; however, the units are typically kept a bit longer. The newest unit is compressed natural gas, for which the City received a grant for the upgrade. The street sweeping program is funded 50% from the general fund and 50% from wastewater because of the storm water implications.

The annual operation cost is \$244,000. Public Works sweeps approximately 26,000 curb miles, which is the method of measuring efficiency throughout the industry. Lodi's curb mile cost is \$9.35, which is low in comparison with other communities, such as Davis (\$39.76), Turlock (\$25.50), and Stockton (\$32.02). Included in Lodi's cost is the depreciation of the street sweeper, employees' salaries and benefits, fuel, parts, labor, and dumping fees.

In response to Mayor Hitchcock, Mr. Bradley stated that Lodi's curb mile cost is low due to the fact that it has good equipment, which is kept in service longer, it has good operators that are consistent and dependable, and the layout of the community (i.e. few hills, more space between parked cars, etc.).

City Manager King reported that in a 2003 survey of approximately 30 cities, the average in-house curb mile cost was \$19.29 and the average cost for contracted service was \$18.88 per curb mile. The closest city to Lodi was Brentwood with a cost of \$9.62.

Mr. Bradley reported that the Division uses regenerative air sweepers, which greatly reduce the amount of dust particulate matter going into the atmosphere. Additionally, there are fewer moving parts, which equates to less wear and tear, as well as less maintenance and clean up. It typically takes 45 minutes to an hour to clean up and put away the sweepers each day.

Factors that hinder street sweeping are heavy rain, low tree limbs that could damage the equipment, trash containers left in the street, traffic, and parked cars. The sweepers begin at 4 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. and are staggered to avoid conflict during clean up at the end of the day. Beginning early also allows them to get into arterials before it is full of traffic moving at higher speeds. Medians require the operators to move to the other side in order to have better visibility and control of the unit. Tree wells, like those in the downtown, require hand work and the sidewalk sweeper blower.

Mr. Bradley reviewed specific complaints that have been received and actions taken to address them. He explained that to post a specific block with no parking would require six signs per block for a total cost of \$450. Another consideration is to sign a general area (e.g. from Lodi Avenue to Cherokee Lane to Kettleman Lane and to the railroad tracks). Signage at only the entrance to the blocked off area would cost approximately \$1,200; however, signing the entire area would cost over \$30,000. With signage, there must be enforcement. The decision would have to be made on whether the City would cite people that violated the signs or tow vehicles. Either option would require Police Department cooperation. At this point, the Police Department does not want to use Partners at 3 a.m. to tag cars, nor does it have the manpower to enforce this on a routine basis. Posting a block on sweeping day would allow the operators to get to the curb without going around parked cars and forces citizen involvement. The negatives are the installation and cost of signs, the enforcement issue, public relations, and that many areas have no other off-street parking available. If staff were to alternate (e.g. one side on Tuesday, the other on Wednesday), it would double the visits to the area and increase the exposure to the trash collection issue.

Council Member Mounce stated that one of her major concerns is the 400 block of East Locust Street, which is packed with cars, some of which are abandoned. If signage were to be done on any one block, she would recommend this area as the highest need.

In reply to Ms. Mounce, Mr. Bradley stated that other areas of high need are Kettleman Lane, between Crescent and Fairmont Streets, and Lower Sacramento Road by Lodi Memorial West. If certain areas are to be monitored more frequently, then permanent signage should be installed.

Dave Bender, Street Supervisor, expressed concern about alternating sides of the street and the scheduling issues it would create for both staff and residents.

Public Works Director Prima recommended that Council make a determination of whether it would approve each case or leave it to staff to handle on a complaint basis.

Council Member Beckman stated that he would prefer Public Works to select four or five test areas and return to Council with a program to implement and follow up with results.

Council Member Mounce questioned if the cost for purchasing signs would be eligible for block grant funding, since some of the streets would be within the target area, to which Mr. Prima responded that he would look into the matter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Myrna Wetzel stated that she enjoys the new sweepers, which are quieter and reduces the dust, and she appreciates that staff is concerned about citizens and does not want to unduly disrupt their lives.

City Manager King commented that staff would need Council's full support once areas are posted. Typically, no parking signs are posted for a specified time. People will see the sweeper go through and will move their cars back; however, the no parking restriction will still be in place, so a police officer could still come through and cite vehicles. The residents then complain that the sign is inconsistent with the sweeper.

Mr. King reported that California cities are seeing greater restrictions on their general funds; therefore, cities are looking for ways to shift other costs to provide service. A couple of years ago, Mr. King performed a survey of Santa Clara County cities, and out of 14 cities surveyed, only two funded street sweeping either partly or whole from the general fund. The majority of cities funded it through the solid waste fund, due mainly to the fact that street sweeping has been closely aligned with janitorial services, solid waste, and refuse. Many cities include street sweeping as part of the solid waste service and fund it through a charge for garbage on the solid waste bill.

Council Member Beckman stated that he is comfortable with how street sweeping is currently funded (i.e. half by general fund and half by storm water).

C. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

D. ADJOURNMENT

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Perrin
Deputy City Clerk